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science, and they may congratulate themselves upon the selection of an historian who has not ignored the claims of other nations.

THE OCTOPUS.<sup>1</sup> — This is a pleasant account of the Octopus or poulpe, adapted to the mind of the average visitor at the immense aquarial establishments of the sea-ports of England, and perhaps worth reading on this side of the water, where poulpes — “these blasphemies of creation against itself,” as Victor Hugo styles them — are common enough southward, but fashionable colossal aquaria are as yet lacking.

EDWARDS'S BUTTERFLIES OF NORTH AMERICA.<sup>2</sup> — The fourth part of the current series of this magnificent work, issued from the Riverside Press at the end of December last (but dated November), contains fewer subjects than usual, two whole plates being given to illustrate the history of *Melitæa Phaeton* and *Papilio brevicauda*. The former plate is perfect as far as the colored figures are concerned, and cannot be surpassed, if it can be equaled, by the best of foreign work; but the plain lithograph of the web is not so satisfactory, showing in but few places any indication of the web-like structure. The other plates contain three species of *Argynnis* (*A. Eurynome*, *Bischoffi*, and *Opis*), and two of *Grapta* (*G. Hylas* and *Marsyas*). The text accompanying the three plates given to these insects is mainly descriptive, but contains some strictures on Mr. Scudder's classification of these species of *Grapta*. The accounts of *Phaeton* and *brevicauda*, on the other hand, are very full, and are welcome additions to the history of our butterflies. That of the former is very nearly complete, but contains a few errors; for instance, in the statement that the rows of hair-bearing tubercles of the newly hatched caterpillar “indicate the position of the future spines.” It has long since been pointed out (*Canadian Entomologist*, March, 1872) that this is not the case, the position of few or none of the spine-bearing eminences of the mature caterpillar corresponding with those of the previous hair-supporting tubercles. These are points of structure to which the author pays little attention, but which are very important in their bearing upon the affinities of butterflies.

In writing that “*Phaeton* alone, out of a hundred species of butterflies that frequent our fields,” protects itself in the larval stage “in a web woven by the community,” Mr. Edwards seems to be unaware that this is the case with every one of the tribe to which *Phaeton* belongs, as far as their history is known, and will therefore doubtless prove true of the few species of Eastern North America whose history has not yet been fully elucidated. It is also true of some other of our common butterflies.

<sup>1</sup> *The Octopus, or the Devil Fish of Fiction and of Fact.* By HENRY LEE. With Illustrations. London. 1875. 12mo, pp. 114. For sale by the Naturalist's Agency, Salem.

<sup>2</sup> *The Butterflies of North America.* With Colored Drawings and Descriptions. By WM. H. EDWARDS. Boston: H. O. Houghton & Co. 4to. \$2.50.